

under my direction, has just informed me that on the 13th of June he found Rosy Gulls breeding abundantly near the station "Málaya" (st. Little).

This station lies some 150 kilometres to the west of Sredne-Kolyansk (on the direct way to Verkhoyansk), on the Alazéya River, near $153\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ E.L. and $67\frac{7}{8}^{\circ}$ N.L., in taiga or forest-clad ground, and forests extend at least some 150 kilometres further down the river, as I was informed by Lamuts. So we may now state that all the lowlands of the northern half of the Kolymá district (bordered by the rivers Chaun and Alazéya, the Arctic Ocean and the Stanowoi Mountains) are inhabited by *Rhodostethia rosea*, and this area covers at least 160,000 square kilometres. In the eastern parts of the Verkhoyansk district it probably breeds up to the Indigirka River.

1905, July 10,
v. Pokhodskoe.

XX.—On some Palaearctic Birds' Eggs from Tibet*.

By H. E. DRESSER, F.Z.S. &c.

COL. WADDELL having kindly placed me in communication with Capt. R. Steen, the Medical Officer at Gyantse, Tibet, that gentleman sent to me some time ago a small collection of eggs which he had taken near the town, together with the parent birds, which he had procured in order that I might identify the eggs, particulars of which are given in the following paper. I include, in brackets, some very interesting field-notes which Capt. Steen has also forwarded. The bird-skins obtained along with the eggs are now in the Zoological Museum at Tring.

RUTICILLA HODGSONI Moore. Hodgson's Redstart.

Dresser, Man. Palaearct. B. p. 51.

Two clutches were sent, each consisting of two eggs, which were taken on the 1st of June, 1905, with two of the parent

* See 'The Ibis,' 1905, p. 525, for the last paper of this series.

birds. They are pale uniform blue, rather paler and clearer than those of *Rubicilla phœnicurus*, and measure 0·80 by 0·60 and 0·76 by 0·59 inch.

(One nest was in a hole in an old wall, but others were found in holes in the sides of clay nullahs. The materials were grass and moss, thickly lined with feathers. The stomach contained grass and small insects, and the iris was light brown. The local name of this bird is *I-tak-tak*.)

LEPTOPÆCILE SOPHIÆ Severtz. Severtzoff's Warbler.

Dresser, Man. Palæarct. B. p. 90.

One clutch of four eggs, which were unfortunately incubated and therefore not blown, was sent, with one specimen of the parent bird. The eggs are very like those of *Phylloscopus* in general character, and are white, finely dotted with deep red, chiefly round the larger end; they measure from 0·60 by 0·44 to 0·62 by 0·46 inch.

(The nest, which was placed in a low bush in the jungle, was domed, with the opening on one side, rather below the middle. It was constructed of moss, wool, and hair, profusely lined with various sorts of feathers, and measured about 6 × 4 inches; it was taken near Gyantse on the 25th of May, 1905. The female sent had the iris red, and the stomach contained small insects and seeds. The call-note was a sort of thin *cheep, cheep*. The local name of the bird is *Chi-chung tebtok*, meaning the small bird the size of a thumb.)

Dr. Hartert, who has examined the bird, refers it to the subspecies *Leptopæcile sphiæ henrici* Oustalet.

PHYLLOSCOPUS AFFINIS (Tickell). Tickell's Willow-Warbler.

Dresser, Man. Palæarct. B. p. 99.

One clutch of three eggs was taken with the parent bird near Gyantse on the 16th of June, 1905; they are white, finely dotted with red round the larger end, and are exactly like those of *Luscinola indica* figured in 'The Ibis' for 1903, pl. x. figs. 14 & 16; they measure 0·60 by 0·44, 0·61 by 0·44, and 0·62 by 0·47 inch respectively.

(The nest was placed in low scrub near the ground; it

was dome-shaped with the opening near the top, and constructed of dry grass well lined with feathers. The usual number of eggs is four or five. The bird is plentiful in all the jungles. Iris black. Local name *Chi-chung tebtok*.)

The skin sent was in very poor condition, and, not having sufficient material for comparison, I sent it to Tring. Dr. Hartert has identified it as *Phylloscopus affinis*, but the eggs differ from others said to be those of *Phylloscopus affinis* taken near Souamurg, Kashmir, by Major Buchanan, which are pure white, unspotted. I am informed by Indian oologists that the eggs of this species are usually white, unspotted; but I have received one clutch taken by Mr. Whymper in Kashmir in which one egg is spotted, like those from Tibet, though the others are pure white. It would therefore appear that the eggs of *Phylloscopus affinis* may not only be pure white, but also white finely spotted with red.

BABAX WADDELLI Dresser, P. Z. S. 1905, vol. i. p. 54, pl. iv.

Two clutches were sent, one of three and the other of two eggs, together with the parent birds, taken near Gyantse on the 27th of May, 1905. These eggs are all dark uniform blue, unspotted, a shade lighter in tint than those of *Hodgsonius phœnicuroides*, but much larger, measuring 1.26 by 0.9 inch.

(This bird nests in most of the jungles on the Gyantse plain. The nest was built of small twigs, grass, and wool, and lined with fine grass. It was placed near the top of a small sapling and contained three eggs, but sometimes four are laid. I have found nests in old willow trees and in low scrub-jungle. The bird is very secretive, runs swiftly or flies low from cover to cover, and is most difficult to shoot. The adult male was found sitting on the nest. Iris black. Food, seeds and small insects. Local name *Kyo-mo*.)

MOTACILLA HODGSONI Gray. Hodgson's Wagtail.

Dresser, Man. Palæarct. B. p. 199.

One clutch of four eggs, with the parent bird, was taken near Gyantse on the 1st of June, 1905. They are greyish white, finely speckled all over the surface with wood-brown,

and in three the spots are more numerous at the larger end. In size they vary from 0·82 by 0·58 to 0·85 by 0·63 inch.

(The nest was in a heap of stones at the side of a stream, and was composed chiefly of hair of all sorts and a little grass, and lined with hair. Local name *Ting-ting-ma*.)

MOTACILLA CITREOLOIDES (Hodgs.). Hodgson's Yellow-headed Wagtail.

Dresser, Man. Palæarct. B. p. 204.

One clutch of three eggs, with both parent birds, was taken near Gyantse on the 17th of June, 1905. They resemble greenish-grey varieties of those of *Motacilla flava*, but are larger, measuring from 0·81 by 0·60 to 0·84 by 0·60 inch.

(The nest was well hidden in a hollow in a meadow near the river-bank, and was constructed of grass and wool, and lined with hair. The bird's stomach contained insects. The bird is not very common. The iris is grey. Local name *Ani Kegah* or *Ani-chepta*, at Lhasa *Si-chi-pi-chi*.)

LANIUS TEPHRONOTUS (Vigors). Grey-backed Shrike.

Dresser, Man. Palæarct. B. p. 245.

Two clutches were sent of two and three eggs respectively, with the parent birds, taken near Gyantse on the 4th of June, 1905. They are pale buffy white with pale brown markings chiefly massed round the larger end, and measure from 0·95 by 0·72 to 0·96 by 0·73 inch. In general appearance they closely resemble those of *Lanius raddii* (figured 'Ibis,' 1905, pl. xi, figs. 1 & 2), but are larger.

(The nest was constructed of sticks, roots, and wool, and lined with fine grass-roots; it was placed in the top of a young sapling, but this Shrike also builds in low bushes five or six feet from the ground. It was often seen on the topmost twig of a small tree uttering its hoarse call of *dre, dre, dre, dre*; whence it is locally named *Dre-Dre*.)

MONTIFRINGILLA ADAMSI Moore. Adams's Snow-Finch.

Dresser, Man. Palæarct. B. p. 299.

One clutch of three and another of two eggs (one of the latter broken), with the parent bird, were taken near Gyantse

on the 31st of May, 1905. The eggs are pure white, very smooth, but not glossy, and measure 0·85 by 0·66 inch.

(This Finch is always seen about stony places, chiefly on the lower slopes of the hill-sides. The nest was under a large rock, about a foot from the opening. Earth had been scooped out to make room for the nest, which consisted of a foundation of grass, the rest being an interesting mixture of hair and feathers of all the different mammals and birds in the locality. The male bird had the iris brown, and the stomach contained insects and seeds. Local name *Richi-kya-shok*.)

MONTIFRINGILLA MANDELLII. Mandelli's Snow-Finch.

Dresser, Man. Palæarct. B. p. 299.

One clutch of two eggs was sent, with the parent bird, obtained near Gyantse on the 14th of July, 1905. They are pure white and slightly glossy, and measure 0·83 by 0·59 inch.

(This bird has the same habits and flight as *Podoces humilis*, but it places its nest in the abandoned holes of mouse-hares, which are not straight but tortuous, and does not excavate a hole for itself. It makes, however, a somewhat large nest-chamber from three to five paces from the entrance. The nest is not so big as that of *Podoces humilis* and consists of a mass of grass, roots, and hair of the mouse-hare. This bird is said never to dig its own nest-hole; we found it frequenting the slope of a hill near Gyantse and associating with the mouse-hare and *Podoces humilis*; its food consisted of insects and seeds. Local name *Abjé*.)

LINOTA RUFO-STRIGATA Walton, Bull. B. O. C. xv. p. 93.

Five clutches of three and two eggs respectively, with the parent birds, all obtained near Gyantse on the 14th and 17th of July, 1905. These eggs resemble those of *Linota flavirostris*, but are paler, being bluish white marked, chiefly at the larger end, with dull red and blackish-red spots; they measure from 0·69 by 0·50 to 0·70 by 0·52 inch.

(The nests of these birds were built on the top of low

thorny bushes about two feet from the ground, on the lower slopes of the hills, and were constructed of grass and moss, lined with wool and hair, chiefly the latter. The number of eggs varied from two to three or four, and we never found five. Iris greyish brown. Food, seeds. Local name *Pegam-bejée.*)

CARPODACUS SEVERTZOWI Sharpe. Severtzoff's Rose-Finch.
Dresser, Man. Palæarct. B. p. 319.

One clutch of three eggs, taken on the 1st of August, 1905, with one of the parent birds, a female. They are exactly similar to those figured by me in 'The Ibis' for 1904, pl. iii. figs. 1 & 3.

(This nest was taken near Kangma, thirty miles from Gyantse; it consisted of dry grass and roots with a thick lining of hair; it was placed on a low bush about a foot from the ground, and contained four almost fresh eggs. These low bushes grow about the edges of the small fields at the foot of the nullahs. Local name of bird *Awäl-look-si.*)

CARPODACUS PULCHERRIMUS (Hodgson). Hodgson's Rose-Finch.

Dresser, Man. Palæarct. B. p. 325.

Two clutches of eggs and several birds were sent, all obtained near Gyantse in the latter half of July. The eggs are deep turquoise-blue, slightly dotted at the larger end with black, and measure from 0.75 by 0.54 to 0.76 by 0.55 inch.

(This Rose-Finch nests in bushes in the thorn-jungles, some three or four feet from the ground, and never in the higher branches. The nest is constructed of dry grass with a very thick lining of hair, and the number of eggs in a clutch varies from three to four. Local name *Pegam-bejée.*)

OTOCORYS ELWESI Blanf. Elwes's Shore-Lark.

Dresser Man. Palæarct. B. p. 379.

One clutch of two eggs, with the parent bird, obtained near Gyantse on the 6th of June, 1905. They are pale yellowish grey, marked all over with pale wood-brown, and

resemble pale eggs of *Otocorys alpestris*, though they are rather larger, measuring 0·94 by 0·64 inch.

(This Lark is fairly common on the hill-sides and in lonely places high up in the hills; it rarely occurs in the valleys and never in flocks. The nest is placed on the ground, on a hillock, and is composed of grass, lined with plant-cotton; from three to four eggs are said to be laid usually. Food, chiefly insects. Local name *Koogo-tingma* and *Boogo-tunga*.)

ALAUDA INOPINATA Bianchi. Tibetan Skylark.

Bianchi, *Annuaire Mus. St. Pétersb.* ix. pp. xxiv, xxx, & xxxi.

Three clutches of three, three, and two eggs respectively, with the parent birds, were taken on the 28th, 30th, and 31st of May, 1905. These eggs are somewhat variable in general appearance, two clutches being dull warm whitish, very closely and finely dotted with warm brown, whereas the third clutch is much paler, the ground-colour being white and the brown markings lighter. In general appearance they closely resemble eggs of *Aldaia gulgula*, but are larger, measuring from 0·89 by 0·67 to 0·92 by 0·69 inch.

(The nest was usually a mere cup or hollow on a grassy bank, neatly lined with fine dry grass, but in one case there was a slight lining of a sort of plant-cotton. The bird is very plentiful around Gyantse. Iris blackish brown. Food, seeds and insects. Local name *Cho-mo*.)

CALANDRELLA TIBETANA Brooks. Tibetan Short-toed Lark.

One clutch of four eggs with the parent birds, which were obtained near Gyantse on the 1st of June, 1905. These eggs are finely dotted with warm light brown on a white ground, the spots being more numerous round the larger end; they are indistinguishable from eggs of *Calandrella brachydactyla* obtained by Dr. Krüper near Smyrna.

(This bird is very common on the hill-sides near Gyantse. The nest was constructed of dried grass, sparingly lined with plant-cotton, and was placed on the ground on a hill-side under shelter of a little tuft of grass. Iris brown. Food, seeds and insects. Local name *Ise-cho*.)

PODOCES HUMILIS Hume. Brown Ground-Chough.

Dresser, Man. Palæarct. B. p. 409.

Two clutches with the parent birds, obtained on the 14th and 17th of July. The eggs are pure white and slightly glossy, and measure from 0·88 by 0·62 to 0·96 by 0·64 inch.

(These birds breed in June and July; a nest found on the 1st of July contained three young birds and one egg, while others found in July contained young birds. They are sometimes seen away from the localities inhabited by the little mouse-hares, but are generally associated with them. They dig holes for themselves in which they place their nests, and do not make use of the holes of the mouse-hare as does *Montifringilla mandellii*. Their flight is very low, quite close to the ground, and never protracted, and they are great runners. I have never seen one perched on a tree or bush, as indeed they frequent bare localities. The nest-hole, excavated in the side of a nullah about 18 inches below the top, is straight and narrow till the nesting-chamber is reached, too narrow for the hand to enter. At the end a considerable cavity is excavated, in which the abnormally large nest is placed, and this chamber varies in distance from the entrance from three to twelve feet. The nest is large, as much as fifteen inches in diameter, and consists of a loosely woven mass of dry grass, roots, moss, hair, and wool, with no particular lining; the number of eggs laid varies from three to five. This bird feeds chiefly on insects. Iris brown. Local name *Day-day*.)

PICA BOTTANENSIS Deless. Tibetan Magpie.

One clutch of five eggs taken at Gyantse in May 1905; they do not differ from those of *Pica rustica* taken in Europe.

(The Magpie nests in high trees throughout the month of May.)

ARCHIBUTEO HEMIPTILOPUS Blyth. Himalayan Rough-legged Buzzard.

Dresser, Man. Palæarct. B. p. 515.

One clutch of three eggs with the parent bird, which were

taken near Gyantse on the 10th of May, 1905. These eggs closely resemble those of *Archibuteo lagopus*, and when placed in a series of the latter cannot be separated. The measurements are 2.38 by 1.82, 2.34 by 1.86, and 2.40 by 1.88 in. respectively, and they vary considerably in markings.

(This bird breeds amongst the hills around Gyantse, and the nest was placed on a ledge on the steep side of a deep nullah about thirty feet from the ground and fifteen feet from the top. It was constructed of large sticks and twigs, with a scanty lining of grass. The eggs weighed 2 oz. 110 grains, and the bird is said to occasionally lay four. I shot the adult female, which had the iris greyish brown and the bill and feet brown; in the gizzard was a mouse-hare, of which there were many all round the nest. This species is said to feed also on fish and lizards, but never on carrion or small birds. The male was flying round and seemed to be darker in colour, but I could not get it. Local name *Nya-sen*, at Lhasa *Isib-lak*.)

MILVUS MELANOTIS Temm. & Schlegel. Black-cared Kite.
Dresser, Man. Palearct. B. p. 536.

Three eggs, one of which arrived in small pieces, with one of the parent birds, an adult female. They vary considerably in markings, and closely resemble eggs of *Milvus aegyptius*, but are larger, the two which arrived safely measuring 2.20 by 1.75 and 2.27 by 1.76 inch respectively.

(This Kite breeds near Gyantse all through the month of May. I examined several nests, and never found more than a single egg. The bird sent had the iris grey. The food is principally carrion. Local name *Dé-lé*, at Lhasa *Ping-gyu-ma*.)

FALCO TINNUNCULUS Linn. Kestrel.

Dresser, Man. Palearct. B. p. 552.

One clutch of three eggs, taken at Gyantse Jong on the 22nd of May, 1905, which are blotched and marked with dull red on a yellowish-white ground.

(The eggs were laid in a hole in a wall, in a little hollow with a rim of clay. I also found young birds on the 2nd of June in a hole in a high clay-bank. The local name is *Irá*.)

ANSER INDICUS (Lath.). Bar-headed Goose.

Dresser, Man. Palæarct. B. p. 593.

Two eggs taken at Bham-tso on the 9th of June, 1905. They resemble those of the European Grey Goose in shape and coloration, and measure 3·26 by 2·16 inches. Unfortunately no down was sent.

PERDIX HODGSONIÆ Hodgson. Tibetan Partridge.

Dresser, Man. Palæarct. B. p. 684.

One clutch of five eggs with the parent bird, obtained near Gyantse on the 17th of June, 1905. These eggs resemble some of those of *Perdix cinerea* in my collection in being brownish cream-coloured, and measure from 1·40 by 1·05 to 1·45 by 1·07 inch.

(This Partridge breeds in the grass between the fields. I found one nest containing five, and another containing four eggs.)

TETRAOGALLUS TIBETANUS Gould. Tibetan Snow-Partridge.

Dresser, Man. Palæarct. B. p. 690.

One clutch of six eggs with the hen bird, obtained near Gyantse on the 2nd of June, 1905. In general appearance these eggs resemble those of *Tetraogallus caucasicus*, being clay-buff tinged with oil-green, and well spotted with dull dark rufous, but some of them are rather paler with little tinge of oil-green. They are smaller than those of any other species of *Tetraogallus*, measuring from 2·29 by 1·58 to 2·31 by 1·63 inches.

(The nest was composed of grass and feathers, and was placed under the shelter of a rock at the top of a high rocky mountain at an altitude of 15,000 feet. The call of this bird is Partridge-like, and it is a great runner, appearing only to fly when suddenly frightened. In the winter it unites in coveys of from twelve to fifteen individuals.)

The egg of this bird was well figured in the Cat. of Birds' Eggs in Brit. Mus. vol. i. pl. ii. fig. 7, but the specimen there figured is much paler than those above described and has none of the oil-green tinge.

GRUS NIGRICOLLIS Prjev. Black-necked Crane.

Dresser, Man. Palæarct. B. p. 718.

Two eggs, which were taken on the 12th of June, 1905. The bird was not sent, but it was identified by Capt. Steen. These eggs are olive-grey, with pale reddish-brown shell-blotches and darker surface-markings, one being more boldly blotched than the other; they measure 3·80 by 2·40 and 4·01 by 2·38 inches respectively. They resemble some varieties of eggs of *Grus communis*.

(They were found in a hollow on an island near the edge of Bhan-tso, and there was practically no nest. Tibetan name *Tung-dū*.)

XXI.—*Bird-Notes from South Africa.*

By A. H. EVANS.

THE activity of South-African ornithologists, as witnessed by recent papers in various journals, and especially by the "Birds" of 'The Fauna of South Africa' by Messrs. Stark and Selater, is so pronounced at the present time that mere lists of species from particular localities will soon become superfluous, and, moreover, are chiefly the province of resident observers; but it may interest the readers of 'The Ibis' to hear of the birds noticed during the visit of the British Association to South Africa in August and September 1905, as the narrative will shew what forms are likely to be met with during a winter-journey through the vast area extending from Cape Town to the Zambesi and also the varied character of the districts which they are there found to inhabit. Rare or local species always require special search, and this was seldom possible in the restricted time at my disposal, but advantage was taken of every opportunity that presented itself of examining the country in the neighbourhood of the towns visited.

During the outward voyage of the 'Saxon' comparatively few birds were noticed, as we only touched at Madeira, and the weather was too fine for wanderers to seek refuge on ship-